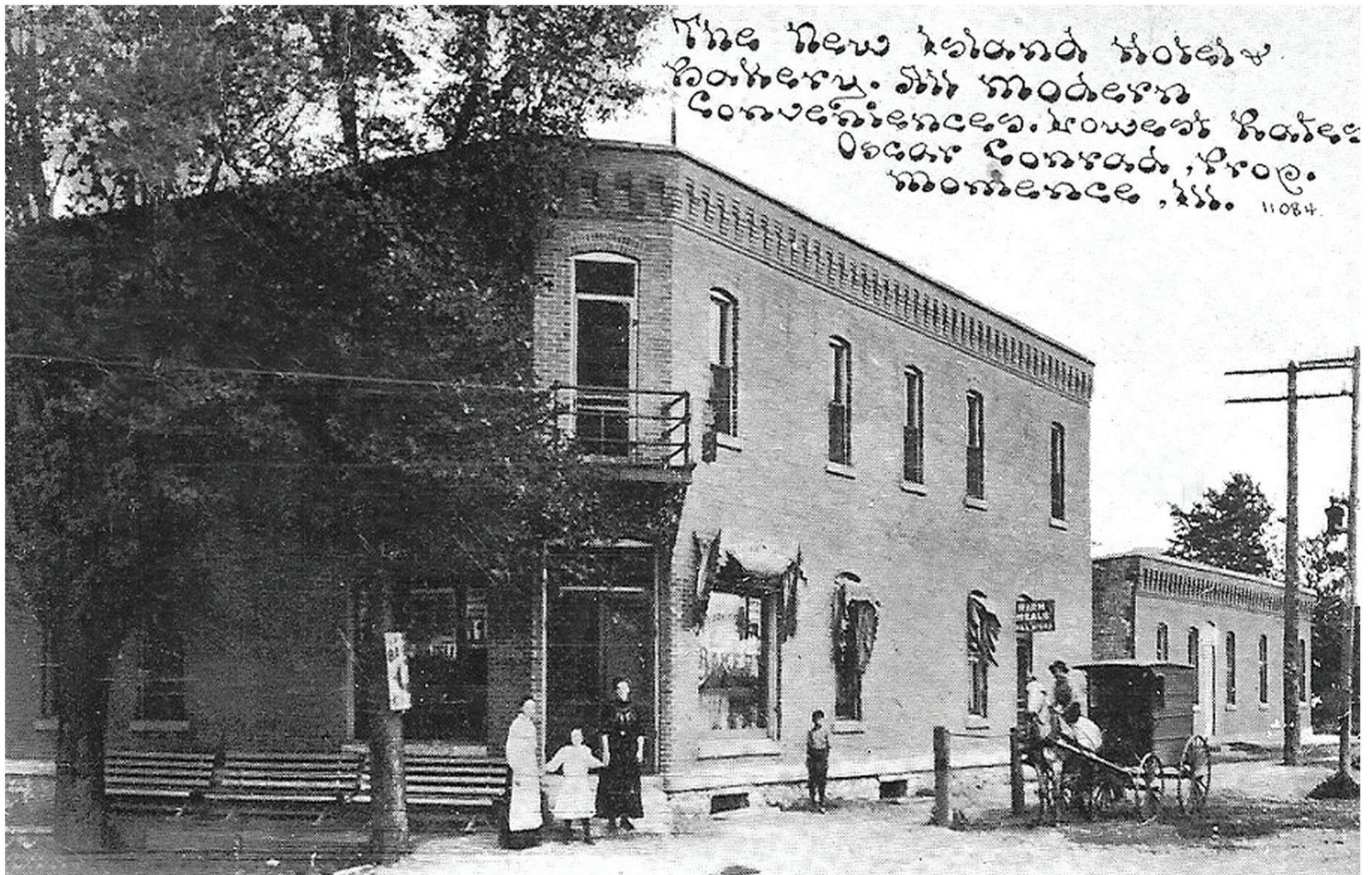




Conrad Bakery

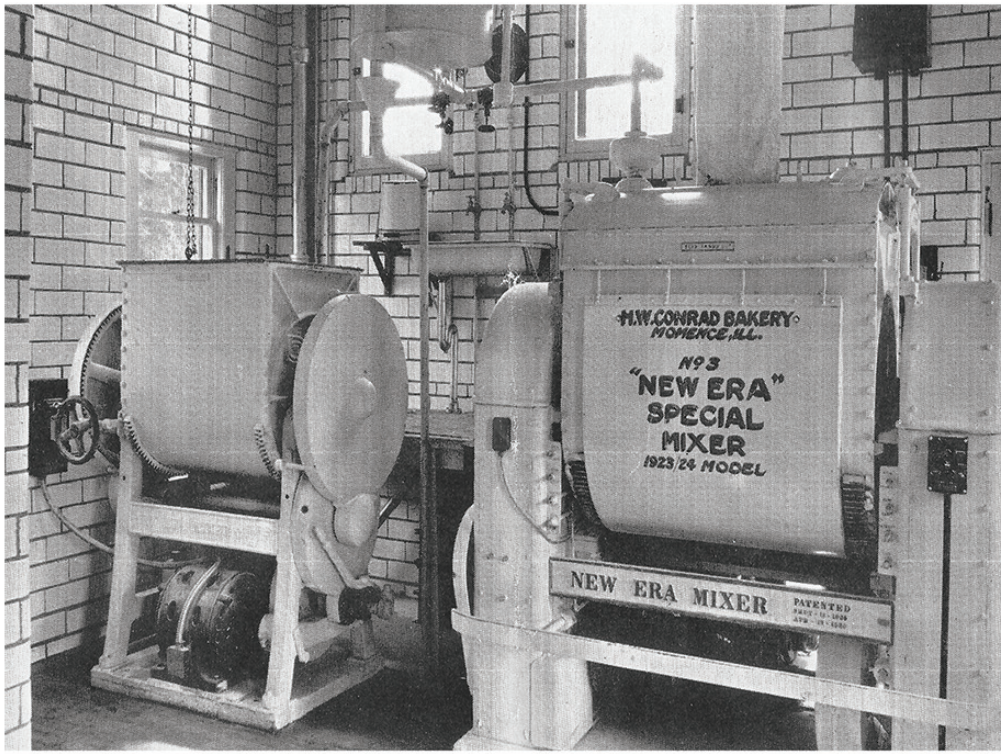
Story by: Janet Cremer

The sweet smell of fresh baked breads and pastries is long gone, but the memories and stories associated with Conrad's Bakery still live on. The bakery, located where the log cabin stands at Conrad Park, just off of Dixie Highway, operated at the site beginning in 1909.

Oscar Conrad came to the U.S. from Germany in 1899. He and his wife, Clara Pabst Conrad, first settled in Chicago, where Oscar worked as a parade rider for the Barnum and Bailey Circus. Five years later, they moved to Momence, first establishing a bakery at the corner of Front (Washington) and Range Street (Dixie Highway.) Oscar then built a bakery and hotel at the site of Conrad Park, along with a retail outlet at the old Momence Theatre building.

In 1919, Oscar's son, Henry, took over, turning the bakery from retail to a wholesale operation. The hotel was closed but a mechanic's shop to work on the delivery trucks was added.

In her book, *Momence, the Making of a River Town*, Kay Hess wrote that "in the first days bread was baked in the shop and wrapped by hand with the help of Henry's wife Hazel McConnell of Momence." It was delivered to stores in town in a push cart by Henry himself.



By 1925, delivery expanded to as far away as Dwight; Chicago; and Gary, Ind. Modern bread mixers, dividers, ovens, slicing and wrapping machines replaced the old equipment, Mrs. Hess wrote. At the height of their business, Conrad's had 65 employees who made not only bread but cakes, long johns, bismarks and later, buns for McDonald's restaurants.

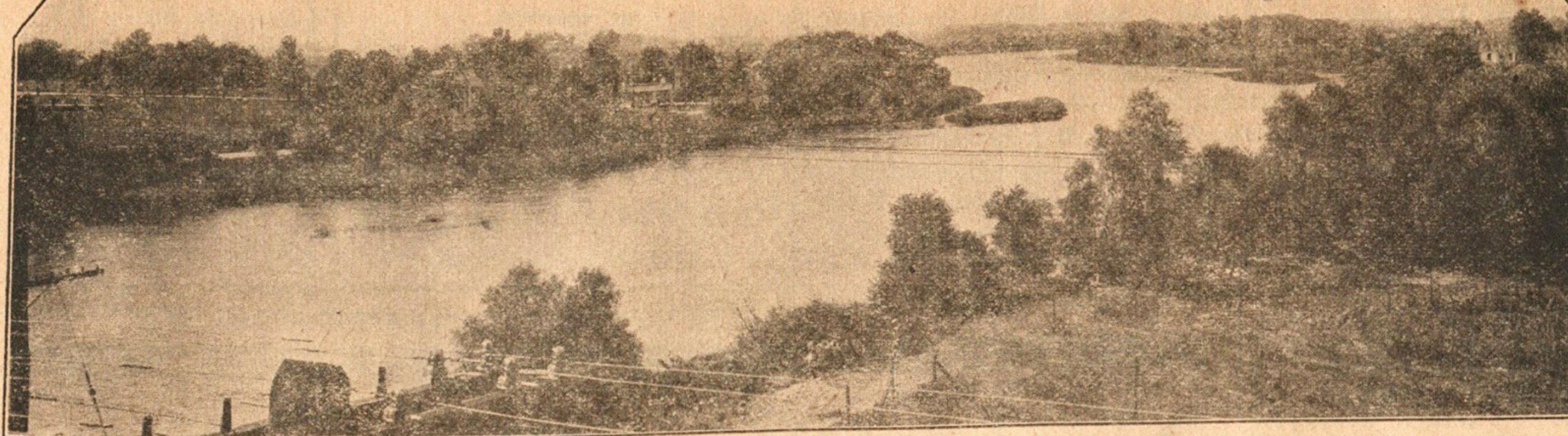
The bakery also housed "a beautiful recreation room on the river that anyone could use," remembered June Nagle Hamann of Grant Park, a niece of Henry and Hazel Conrad, in a Journal article regarding Conrad's. The rec room had a locker room made of Tiffany enamel brick produced at the Momence brick yard. It was used by the boys' basketball team the Conrad's sponsored.

Hardship struck when Henry Conrad was kidnapped on November 26, 1929, nabbed in his very own bakery. The gangsters held Conrad for ransom and when they drove him to a Lowell bakery so he could cash a check as a \$1,000 down payment, the bakery workers told him they only had \$17 on hand.

Lucky for Conrad, the bandits were driving with their emergency brake on and the car caught fire. They abandoned the smoking Packard and hijacked a Chevy driven by Carl Schultz, whom they kicked out of his own car. When the Packard stopped smoking, Conrad drove it to a nearby farmhouse for help. The two gunmen were never seen again.

The business suffered another setback on November 10, 1933, when Henry and Hazel, both 38, were killed in a car accident while driving home from Chicago. Late in the night, their car ran out of gas two miles north of Momence and when Conrad flagged down an oncoming car for help, the driver accidentally hit the two. Hazel was instantly killed. Henry died on the way to the hospital.

A short time later, the business went bankrupt. In 1935, the business and its equipment were purchased by retired Chicago baker Edward Litoborski. Litoborski partnered with his son and four daughters, who successfully operated the bakery until it closed in 1962.



An Up-to-Date Illinois Bakery

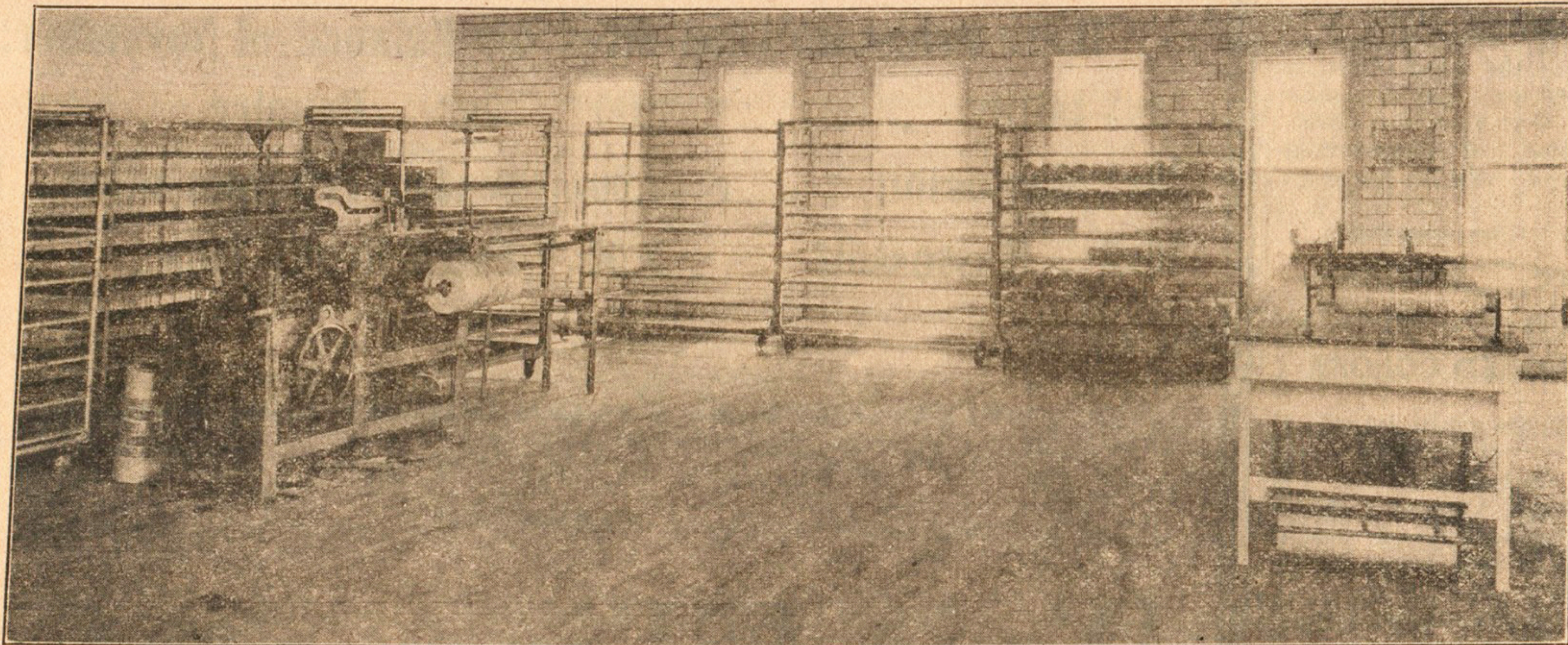
How H. W. Conrad of Momence, Illinois, Has Built a Successful Business on a Basis of Quality

That push, energy and quality production will gain its reward has been fully demonstrated in the case of the H. W. Conrad Bakery of this city. While the fame of this growing industry has been spreading far and near for several

years, it was left for the Bakers' Weekly, published in New York City to make the Conrad Bakery known in every part of the country. So rapid has been the growth of this bakery that it attracted the attention of the editor of the

Bakers' Weekly, which is the leading bakers journal in this country, who sent a representative to this city to investigate the plant. As a result of this visit the following article appeared in a recent issue of that paper, together with the il-

lustrations which gives some idea of the modern plant. It is a real pleasure for the Press-Reporter to reproduce the article, so that the old saying 'A Prophet is not without honor, save in his own Country' may be again verified in our own home town:—Editor.



Wrapping and Cooling Room

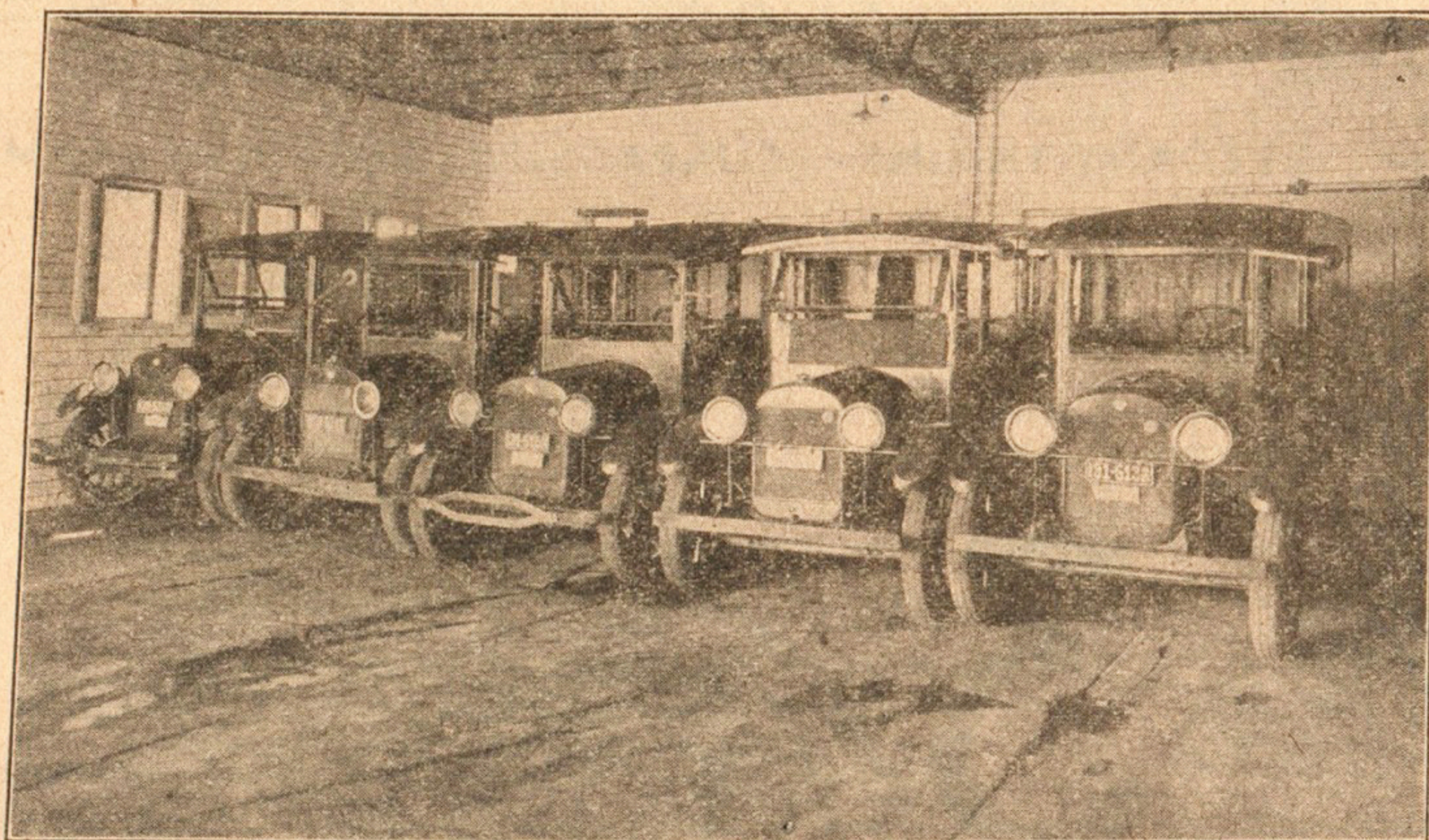
Few bakers can go to the window of their blending and sifting room and look out on anything else except somebody's backyard. In the case of the plant which we describe now the vista which presents itself to us in this way is instead one in which a beautiful winding river winds its way thru green fields and pleasant groves.

What is particularly pertinent is that this aspect of health and prosperity is not confined to the exterior of the bakery alone but the very enterprise on whose property we stand is built up on the principle of cleanliness, quality and service. That these ideas are not only preached but also practiced is evidenced by the scenes depicted by

the various illustrations accompanying this description. Indeed, the location of this particular bakery is peculiar. The Dixie Highway runs the length of the plant on the west side and the Kankakee River is on the south and north, the bakery being located on an island. This situation insures ventilation and light on all sides at all

times, which of course is a big factor in the manufacture of any commodity, and especially bread.

Few years have passed since H. W. Conrad opened up his bakery in this pretty Illinois city. He started with meagre equipment but has succeeded in building up a very satisfactory business in the short time that has passed. In doing



Garage and Loading Room

this he has always been guided by an unswerving determination to manufacture only the best that could be made and to follow in his production and merchandising efforts those ideas found by the majority to be most sound. !This belief that it is a business necessity to be in touch with the latest developments of one's trade has no doubt been a cause of the rapid rise of this bakery, and Mr. Conrad is one of those bakers who is usually found at the various conventions, which he attends not for the purpose of having a good time but with the thought of coming home with more ideas which he can apply to his own business.

FLOUR HANDLING

The flour is received in this bakery by truck and is unloaded into a warehouse on the first floor, which has a capacity of three cars. It is handled on skids by means of a Service Elevator, sold by the Union Steel Products Company of Albion, Michigan. This flour warehouse is supplied with a steady stream of fresh air and sunshine through a wealth of windows and ventilators, and because it is protected from becoming excessively warm the flour never gets over 80 degrees F. This feature is of importance later on which we find that at no time has it been necessary to use ice in the mixers even though a high speed machine

is used.

Instead of dumping the flour in the main warehouse, it is transferred to the third floor on its original skids by means of an elevator and is then dumped directly into a Triumph sifter and then into bins. Quite a few have been using this system of handling flour and find that their loss due to sweepings is practically negligible.

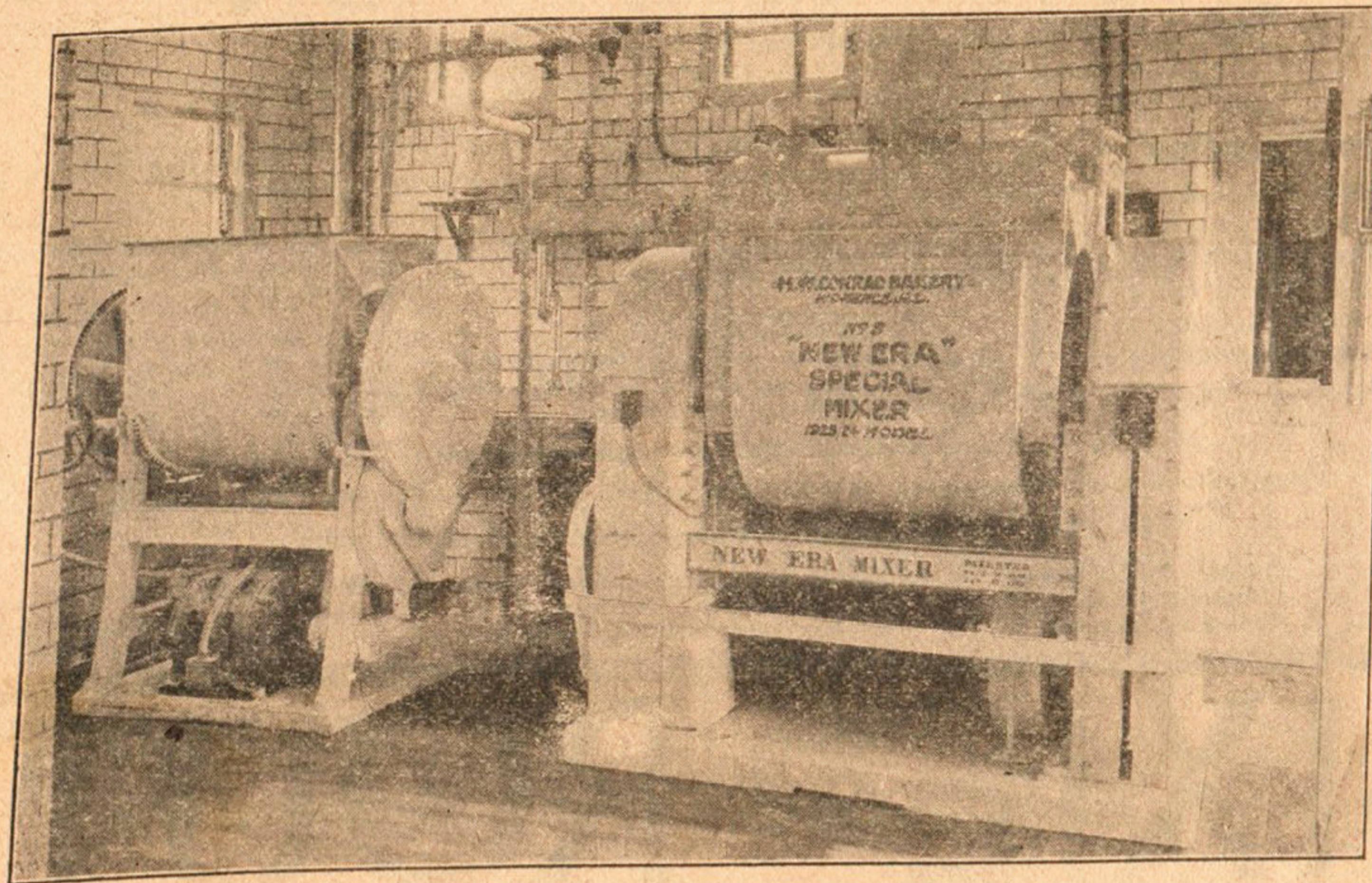
STORAGE

Small ingredients of a perishable nature are stored in a refrigerated room maintained at a low temperature by means of mechanical refrigerating equipment, which was manufactured by the Baker Ice Machine Company of Chicago, and which also supplies brine for

the purpose of circulation in the mixer jackets. This storage of all perishable products is in the basement of the warehouse, which is a one story structure. The main floor is used exclusively for the storing of flour, salt, sugar and so forth. This building immediately adjoins the main building of the plant and has an electric elevator at the north end which brings these raw products to the different floors as they are needed.

There are two mixers, both of them manufactured by the American Oven & Machine Company of Chicago, one of them being a New Era slow speed used on rye doughs the other a New Era special high speed used for white doughs. The automatic weighing hoppers for both flour and water are manufactured by the Triumph Manufacturing Company of Cincinnati. Water is supplied to these mixers at a constant temperature of 35 degrees F., and brine is circulated through the jackets. Air is not used nor is ice added to the mix and the management has never experienced any difficulty in keeping the doughs at the desired temperature even in the warmest weather.

One of the interesting features of the dough room in this plant is Fairbanks floor scale which is used for the purpose of weighing the doughs out of the mixer and then again after fermentation. In this way a check on mixer efficiency and fermentation losses is obtained and also the key weight is found upon which the operation of



A Corner of the Mixing Room

(Continued on Next Page)

An Up to Date Illinois Bakery

(Continued from Preceding Page)

the divider is controlled.

The thermometers and other instruments in the dough room were all obtained from the Taylor Instrument Company of Rochester N. Y., and troughs manufactured by the Union Steel Products Company are being used. This same

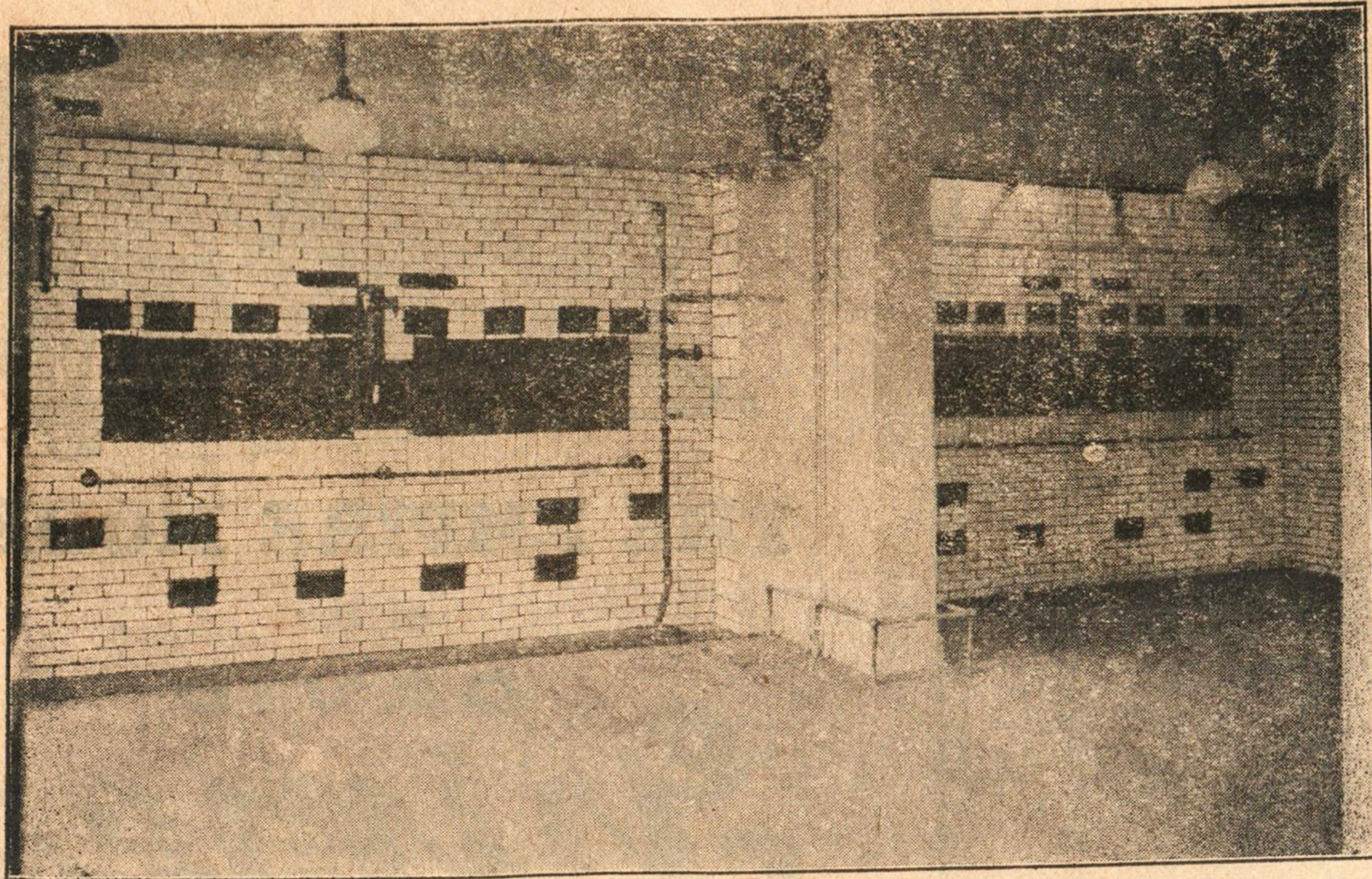
company supplied all racks in use at the plant.

DOUGH HANDLING

The doughs are handled through an American Bakers Machinery Company dough chute to an American divider, then to a petri rounder, Union proofer and Thomson moulder. This latter is equipped with an extension for the manu-

facture of special breads. A Dutchess bun divider is used for buns and rolls.

It is interesting to note that at the time this bakery was equipped Mr. Conrad was unable to obtain an overhead proofer which would give him the desired length of intermediate fermentation and, therefore, purchased a more sim-



ple device which he soon intends to replace because the equipment manufacturers, in their constant improvement of machinery, now have available what he could not buy six years ago.

The bread is baked in three Heller brick ovens, which are rear fired. Coke is used as fuel. It is cooled on racks and wrapped on a

Hayssen machine. Two hand sealers are used in the wrapping room for odd sizes. One is of the small type, the other is known as a Jumbo and is used for sealing long loaves. Both are manufactured by the Wrapper Sealing Machine Company of Janesville, Wis. Steam is furnished for the ovens and proof box from two 5 H. P. boilers. One

of these is a Gem 5 horse power boiler, manufactured by the Gem City Boiler Manufacturing Company of Dayton, Ohio, the other is a 5 horse power submerged tube vertical boiler manufactured by the C. H. Dutton Company of Kalamazoo, Michigan. One hundred pounds per square inch is carried at the boilers, with a re-



Flour Storage Room

ducing valve in the line which cuts the pressure down to 15 lbs. per square inch as it is used.

DISTRIBUTION

The bakery products are distributed to 15 towns within a range of thirty miles from the bakery, by means of six Reo speed wagons. A very satisfactory volume of

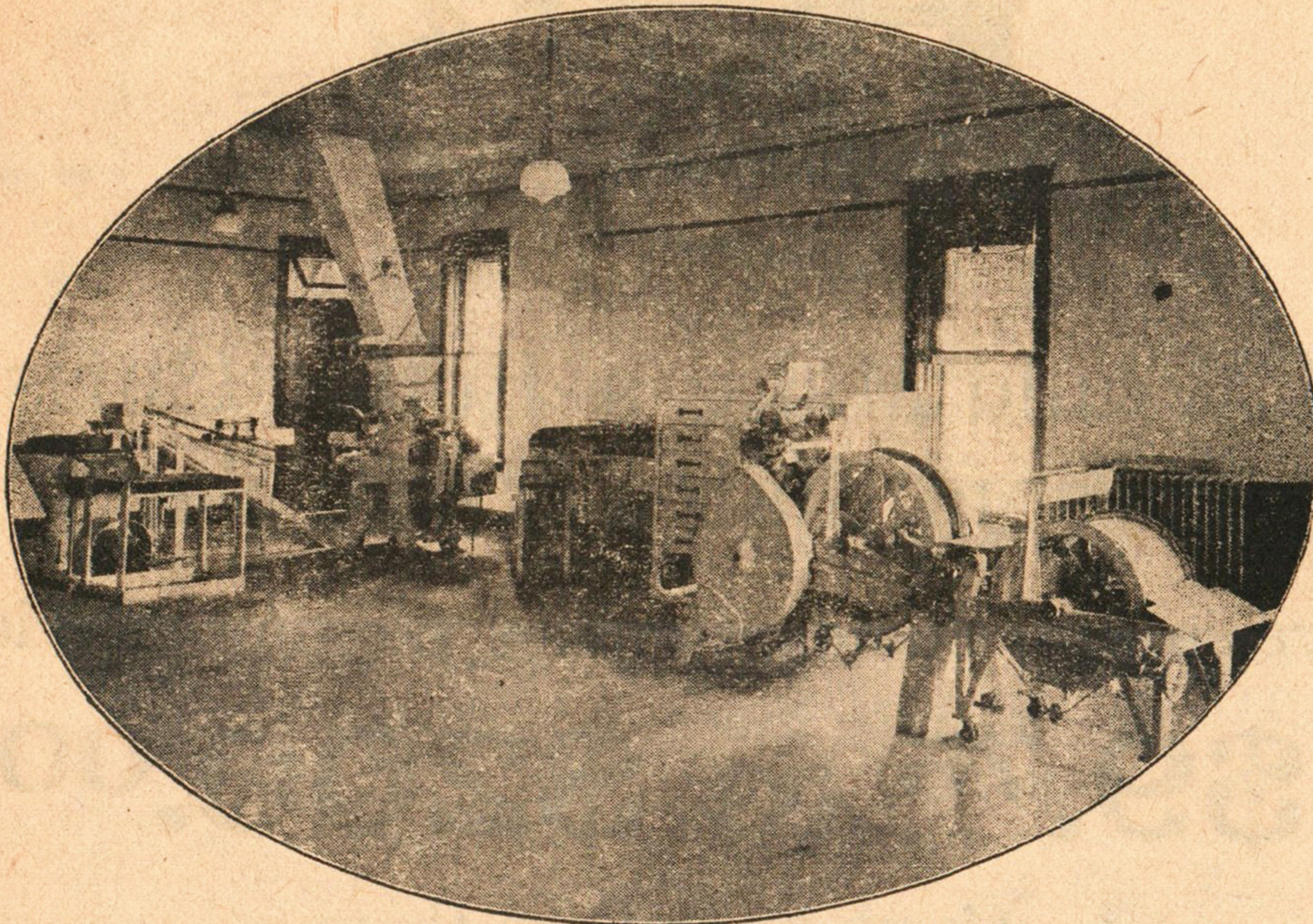
business is being done, a good portion of which is no doubt due to two of the fundamental beliefs on which this bakery has built its business. These ideas are best expressed by means of signs which we find hanging in the shipping room, one of which is entitled, Building Good Will and the other Quality Asserts Itself. A firm and

steadfast resolution to back up such principles with cleanliness and uniformity of production is always bound to yield satisfactory results. This plant is a practical example of the working out of these principles.

HAS PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

Conrad's Bakery has made it a

December 1925



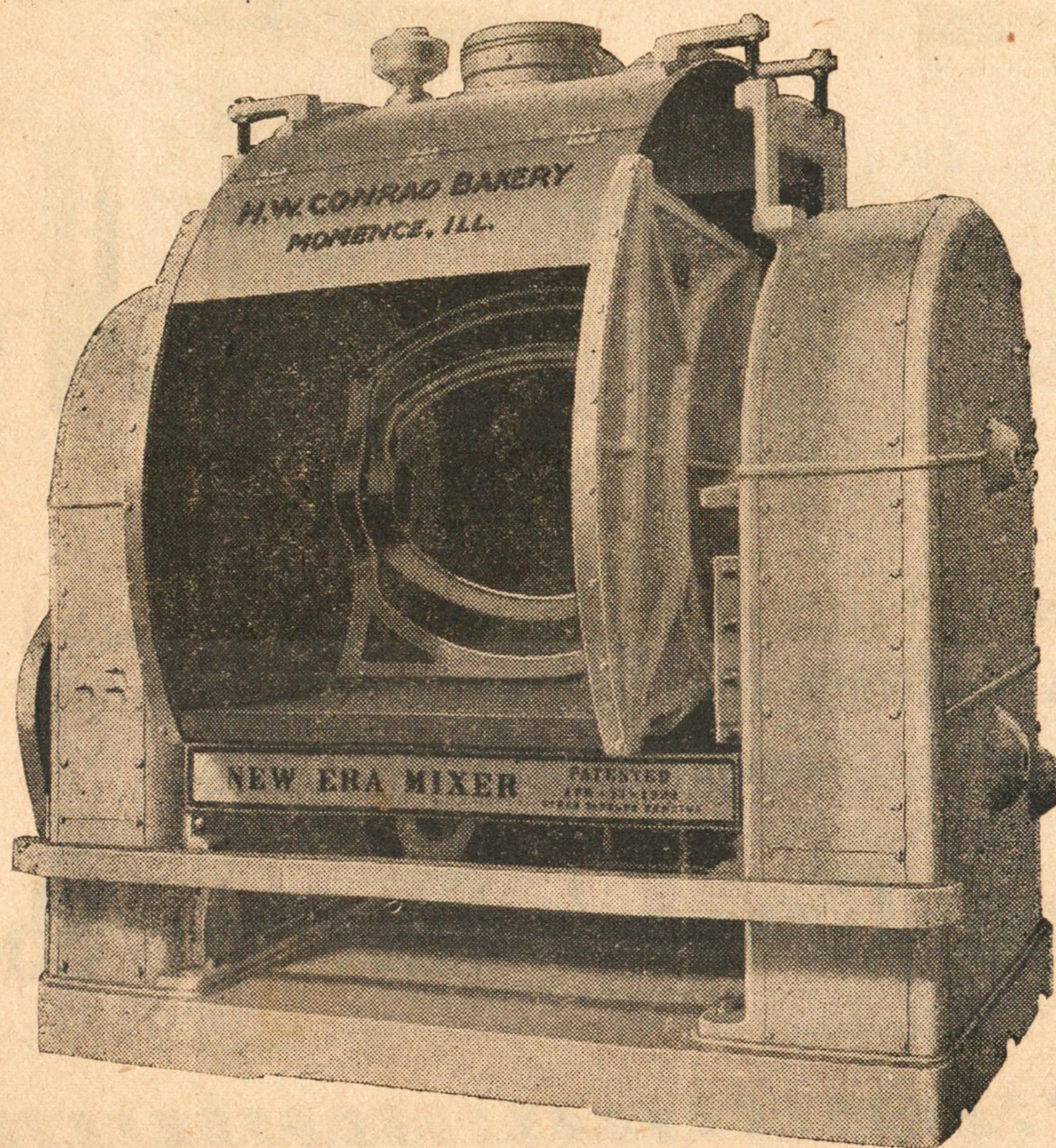
Make-Up Room

point in its advertising to emphasize the fact that visitors are at all times welcome. This invitation has certainly been taken advantage of in the past and has, in turn, been very good advertising throughout the community in which the baked products are sold.

White enameled brick has been used for walls wherever possible and this, together with white paint, always gives an aspect of cleanliness. Two ladies are employed the year round for cleaning and scrubbing of the premises. This expenditure might seem a

large item to many bakers operating a plant of this size, but Mr. Conrad feels that it is really a very small consideration when one takes into account the amount of satisfaction which comes from the fact that visitors, no matter how unexpected, always find his bakery looking spic and span.

December 1925



This Machine is Used for Making White Bread Only. 1,000 Lbs. of Dough Mixed in 12 Minutes



Oscar Conrad



Henry Conrad



Hazel McConnell Conrad



The first Conrad Bakery at the corner of Dixie Highway and East Washington Street, Momence, IL



Conrad Bakery Employee Florence Hayes



Conrad Bakery Employee Frances Wilson



Conrad Bakery Employees Edna Johnson Clark and Eileen Johnson Wilson



1930s Conrad's Uptown Bakery Employees Florence Hayes and Frances Wilson



Conrad Bakery Employees Frances Wilson and Bertle Kelson



1932 Conrad Bakery Employee Picnic



1931 Conrad Bakery Employees Picnic



1925 Conrad Bakery Truck Drivers



1920 Conrad Bakery Truck Drivers



The New Island Hotel
Bakery. All modern
Convenience. Lowest Rates.
Near Conrad, Pro.
Monterey, Cal. 11084.

1909 Conrad Island Hotel and Bakery





Conrad Bakery Employee Florence Hayes



Conrad Bakery Employee Floss Woodard



Conrad Bakery Employees Dale Bloomquist, Art Marcotte and only the last name of Evans



1932 Conrad Bakery



1932 Conrad Bakery Office



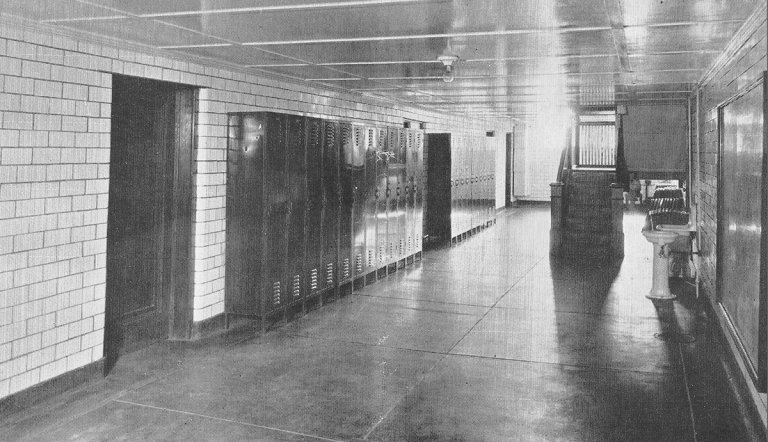
1932 Conrad Bakery Recreation Room



1932 Conrad Bakery Mixers



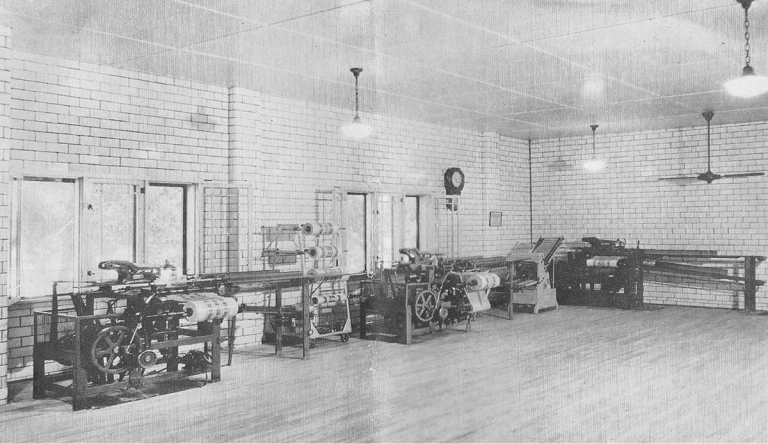
1932 Conrad Bakery Flour Storage Area



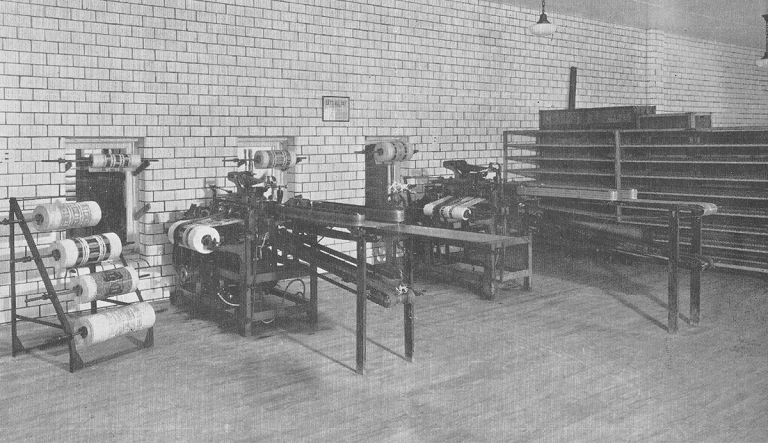
1932 Conrad Bakery Locker Room



1932 Conrad Bakery Making Dough Into Loaves



1932 Conrad Bakery Slicing and Wrapping Area



1932 Conrad Bakery Wrapping Area



Conrad Bakery Momence Gladiolus Festival Float

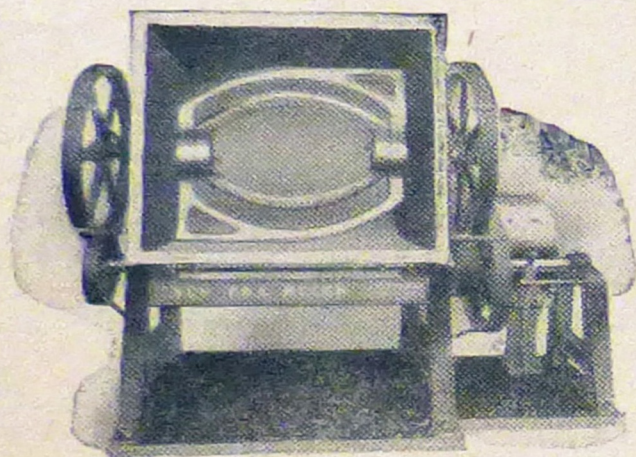
1909 Conrad Bakery Ads

Conrad's Restaurant

*With Ice Cream
Parlor in con-
nection, on the
Island. GOOD
ENOUGH FOR
ANYBODY :: ::*

Separate Dining Room for company or ladies at any time. Hot
Chocolate with Cake or Waffles every Saturday.
Try us once and you will come again.

CONRAD'S OPENING



The public is here-
by notified that I
have opened my store
in my new building
on the Island, where
I am prepared to
meet the demands of
all for

BREAD PIE, CAKES Etc.

I have secured a skilled baker from Germany who will
attend to that part of the business while I attend to the
delivering throughout the city. My wagon is now running
and will continue every day in the year

Momence, Ill.

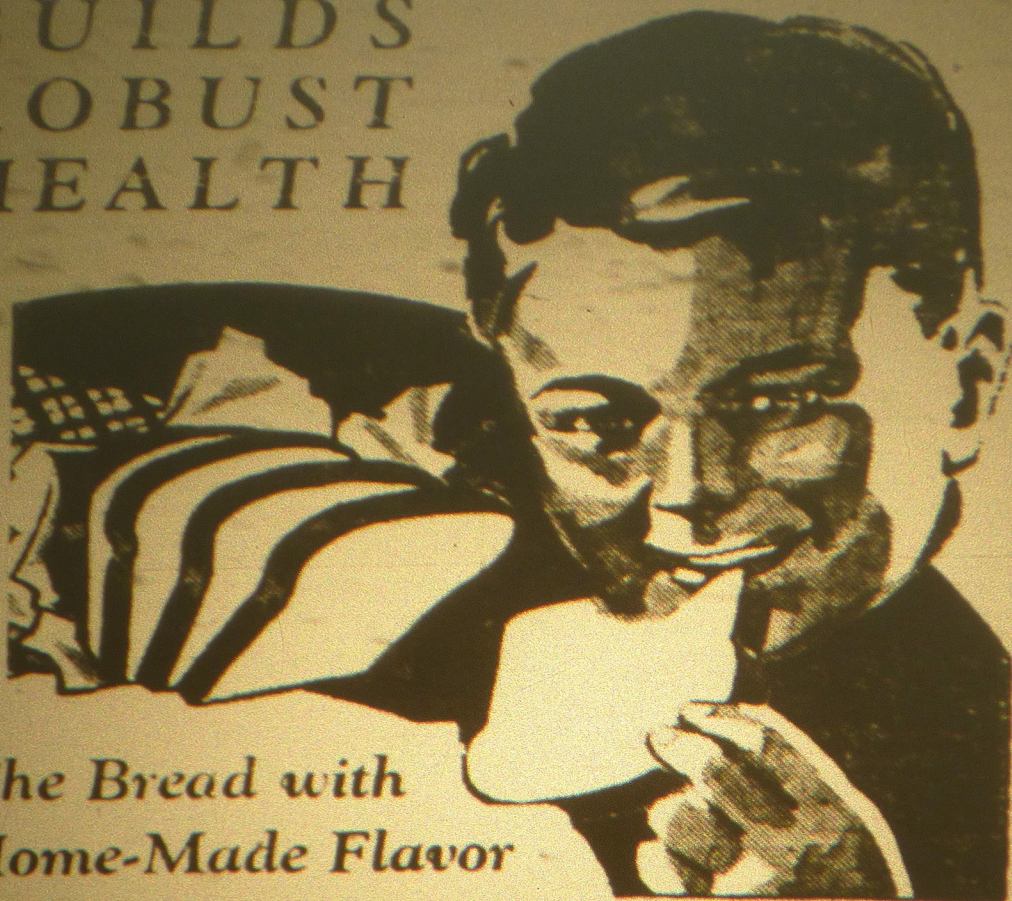
Oscar Conrad.

1930 Conrad Bakery Ads



1934 Conrad Bakery Ad

BUILDS
ROBUST
HEALTH



The Bread with Home-Made Flavor

With a full-flavored goodness that makes it irresistible to young and old, this better bread is packed full of body and health-building vitamins. That's because it's made from pure, wholesome ingredients—the best of whole, fresh milk; selected flour and shortening without the use of any substitutes! Try a loaf or two tonight—and you'll experience a new flavor sensation from the rich, golden crust and finely textured body of our home-baked bread.

The H. W. Conrad Bakery
MOMENCE, ILLINOIS

1934 Conrad Uptown Bakery Ad

ANOTHER ANNIVERSARY AND A GIFT FOR YOU!



For three years now Conrad's "Uptown" shop has been catering to the discriminating housewives of Momence and vicinity.

To each visitor Saturday, May 26th, a little present will be given.

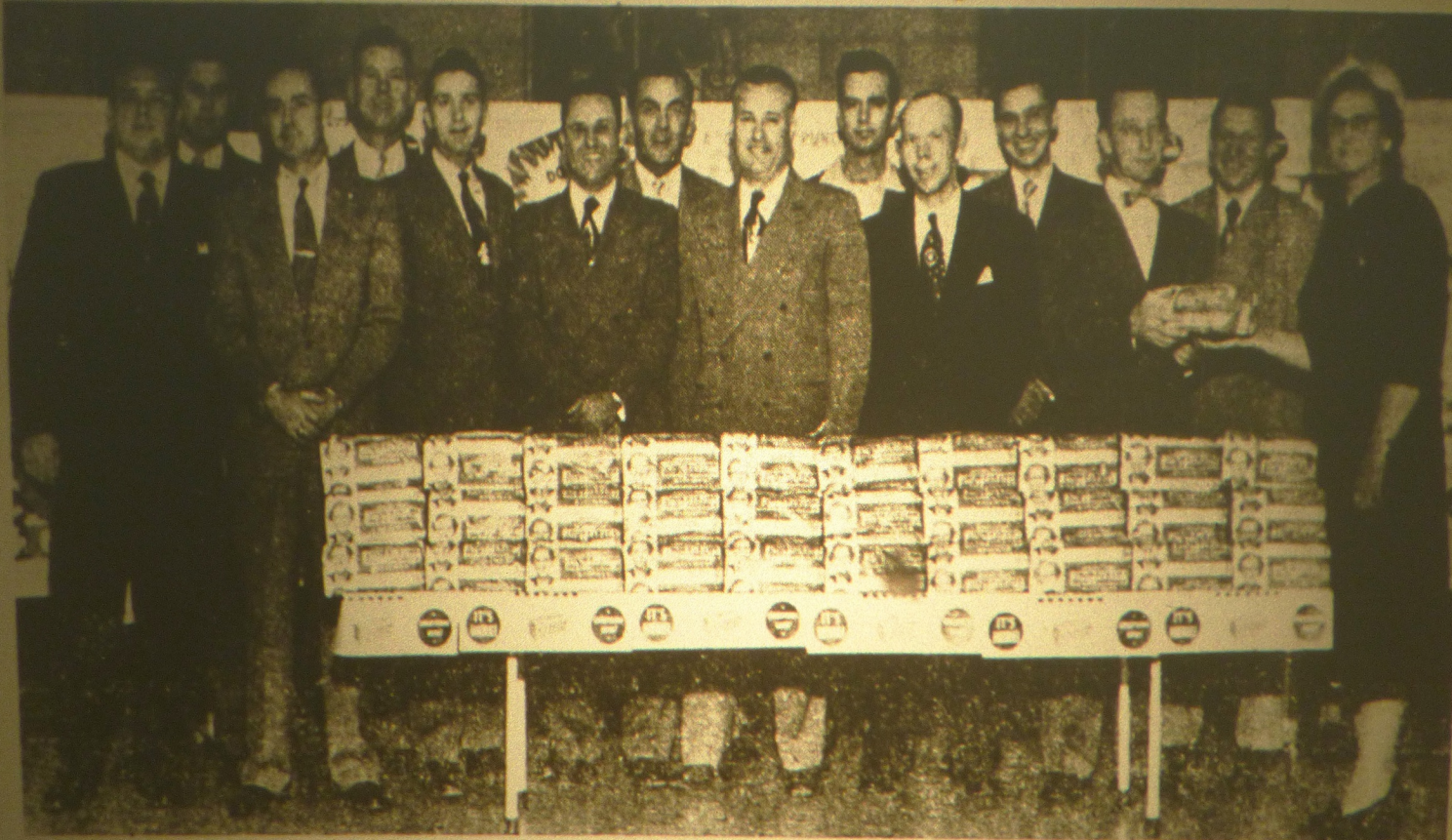
In addition, we offer the following attractive specials for the occasion:

Angel Food Cakes, regularly.....	25c.....	20c
Layer Cakes, regularly.....	25c.....	20c
Orange or Apricot Rolls, regularly.....	15c.....	12c
Cookies, regularly.....	15c.....	12c
Pies, fruit filled, regularly.....	30c.....	24c

CONRAD'S
MOMENCE THEATRE BLDG.

1953 Conrad Bakery Ad

Distribution of New Momenca Product Is Well Under Way In Second Week



Shown above are some of the individuals most directly concerned with the success of efforts to introduce the H. W. Conrad Bakery's new loaf of white bread, named in honor of Aunt Sarah Litoborski, mother of Edmond Litoborski, president and manager of the local firm. The picture of the principals and driver-salesmen was taken at a recent dinner party in the

Methodist Memorial building at the start of the campaign to put the new loaf of bread on the market. Left to right are: Mr. Litoborski, Gay Case, Doyle Powers, Frank Bishir, Cliff Beasley, Phil Taylor, Willard Rice, Roy Keller, Homard Boudreau, Ollie Hanson, Roland Anstrom, Clyde Kurtz, Stanley Ostrow and Aunt Sarah Litoborski.

(Butterfield Photo)

1954 Conrad Bakery Ad

By Popular Request

We have changed the style of
AUNT SARAH'S BREAD

into the new square sandwich loaf.

When you buy a loaf of AUNT SARAH'S BREAD at your grocer's today—you will be purchasing a bread designed for every use—for serving at your table, for toasting—but more important than all—for use in making sandwiches.

Obviously, if you want better sandwiches, you will buy the better sandwich bread—AUNT SARAH'S BREAD.



Baked by the bakers of CONRAD'S FINE BREAD
THE H. W. CONRAD BAKERY, INC.

Momence, Illinois

P. S.: Have you tried CONRAD'S delicious Coffee Cakes? They are a special on Friday of each week at your favorite food store. Order one today—the price is 35c each.

1963 Conrad Bakery Ad

140½ Years of Service To Local Bakery



Before the recent closing of the H. W. Conrad Bakery, Inc., six of the persons shown in the above photo had compiled an average of 23 years plus with the company, entitling them to certificates of award and pensions that will continue as long as they live. The presentation was made recently by Fred Kiedasch (left, standing), business agent for the Bakery and Confectionery Workers (AFL-CIO) Local No. 1, Chicago, in which the local employees held membership. He was assisted by Marvin Wilson (right, standing), steward for the local chapter of the union. The honored employees and the number of years of service for each: Dick Fredenberg, 23½ years, and Hugh Scanlon, 18, standing between the union officials, and seated, left to right, O. E. (Mack) Brown, 27, Mrs. Lorena Marr, 20, and Lawrence Jensen, senior employee with 32 years and in insert to left, John Anstrom, 20 years.

(Butterfield Photo)